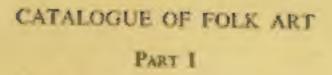




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CATALOGUE OF FOLK ART

ASUTOSH MUSEUM

PART I

BY

MRINAL KANTI PAL, MA.

Formerly Research Scholar and Technical Assistant, Assistin Museum

WITH A FOREWORD BY

D. P. GHOSH

Curator, Asstock Massesses, and Head of the Department of Muscology, University of Calcutin





ASUTOSH MUSEUM OF INDIAN ART UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA

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FOREWORD

Asutosh Museum of Indian Art was established by the University of Calcutta in 1937 in memory of Sir Asutosh Mookerjee, the great Indian educationist, to collect and preserve objects of Indian art and antiquity with special emphasis on the art of Bengal and Eastern India. Besides being a Museum of regional character, the Asutosh Museum is the first Indian University Museum. For the last twenty-five years it has also been performing almost all the functions of a State Museum, there being no State Museum in West Bengal so far.

Its activities in the field include regular archaeological excavation and exploration in different regions of West Bengal and adjoining states of Eastern India, which have led to the discovery of more than a dozen unknown astiquinian sites between the pre-historic and mediaeval times, as also Rural Culture Survey of contemporary traditional arts and crafts of Eastern India.

The Folk Art Gallery is a distinctive feature of the Asutosh Museum. Emissaged in varying mediums of popular cultoral expression, about 2000 dolls and toys. Pat and Patas, Kanthas and Saras are indeed rich and significant documents of an age-long and undying tradition, sometimes even five thousand years old. Fortunately a considerable portion of these creative specimens were collected before the partition of the country in 1947 under the Rural Culture Survey Scheme. Some of these forms and types, of utilitarian as well as ricalistic value, are now irretrievably lost or have undergone transformation beyond recognition, after the mass migration of village artisans from East Beogal. This catalogue is indeed the first part of a contemplated series which may lead to a correct appreciation of the aesthetic sensibility of the contemporary folk mind with its direct prefetence for the colourful and the essential.

7th August, 1962

D. P. GAOSH



PREFACE

It was Srs D. P. Ghosh, who first offered me facilities for carrying on researches on folk-art as a Research Scholar under his able guidance and then by giving me further scope as a Cataloguer of folk-art in the Asutosh Museum. He has taken a very keen interest in my work all along and I am much obliged to him for his many valuable suggestions, which I have incorporated in this catalogue. It is, indeed, beyond my powers to give expression to the deep debt of gratinade which I owe to him. I am also greatly indebted to Dr. Kalyan K. Ganguli for the regular encouragement and the best possible help received from him in my work.

Grateful acknowledgement may also be made to Prof. Niharranjan Roy. Dr. Minendra Nath Basu, Sri Kunja Govinda Goswami and Dr. Chinmoy Dutt who with their best wishes have encouraged me from the very start. I must also convey my soncere thanks to Sri Pacesh Chandra Dus Gupta and my friends Sri Chinaranjan Roy Choudhury, Sri Santosh Kumar Bose, Sri Sasanka Sekhar Mahapatra and artists Sri Prankrishna Pal, Sri Samar Bhowmick and Sri Jayanta Kumar Chakravarty for their kind help and co-operation.

Twenty plates are appended to this work which contain photographs of the Cult-figurines. Dolls and Toys taken by Sri Netai Chandra Das and Sri Krishna Sarkar, the Photographers of the Asutosh Museum. In conclusion, I beg to express my genuine love for the hundreds of unknown rural artists and craftsmen who have retained the traditional Bayour of folk-art even to this day.

M. K. Pal.

Asutosh Museum, University of Calcutta, April 15, 1962



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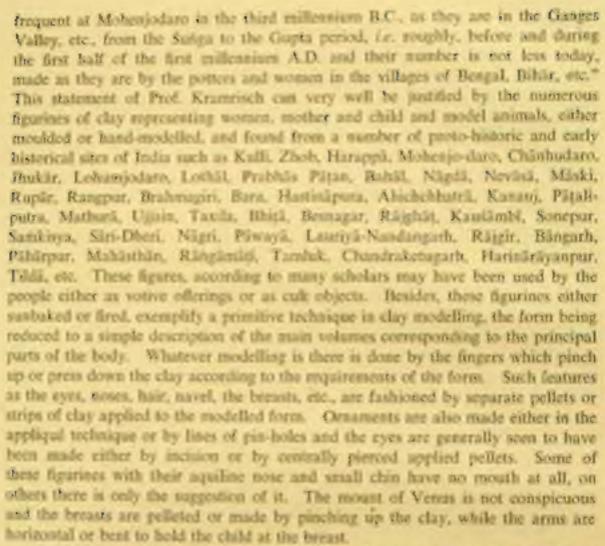
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INTRODUCTION

The Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, University of Calcutta has the distinction of possessing a remarkable collection of folk art objects such as cult-figurines, dolls and toys, "Kimibils" (embroidered wraps), "Pass-chitres" (scroll-paintings), "Paya" (painted manuscripts covers), "Ghatas' and 'Sards' (earthen pots), bronze or brons works, masks, etchings, wood-carvings, etc., unique of its kind. These have been acquired through collection, gift or purchase. It was only in the year 1941, when a scheme known as "Rural Art Survey Scheme" was devised with a view to "Critically and scientifically study the religious, social, literary and specially the aesthetic background of the villages of Bengal, and to suggest means and initiate steps for the preservation and renewal of the different aspects of the rural culture as an essential part of the larger scheme of Rural Reconstruction'; but the scheme could be given effect to only partially in 1947. Henceforward there has been a regular programme of activities facilitating growth and development of the scheme and collection of rural art objects had to be undertaken in collaboration with a good number of research scholars, enthusiastic art-lovers, noted art collectors and art-connoisseurs including Sri D. P. Ghosh, st.s., founder Curator of the museum who has been specially successful in eariching the folk art gallery of the museum by a large number of unique traditional art objects collected in course of his extensive tours in rural Bengal, Bihir and Orissi. But unfortunately no exhaustive or descriptive cainlogue of the significant folloart objects in the collection of the museum has yet been prepared on account of various considerations. As regards cataloguing of the folk-art objects it should be noted here that this part dealing with the cult-figurines and cult objects, dells and toys mainly collected from Bengal and also from Biliar and Assien has been compiled from a critical and comparative view point. The objects have been classified district-wise and subject-wise and photographs of the interesting varieties have also been incorporated in the plates of this catalogue.

These folk-art objects are typical examples of traditional art having a very large bearing on the cultural life of the mauses of our country. The figurities with their archaic treatment and primitive characteristics have played an important role in retaining the community of traditional arts throughout the ages. According to many scholars the tradition of making these cultifigurines is pre-Aryan and sometimes goes further back to more remote ages. Prof. Krawnisch describes them as 'ageleus types and their timed variations'. In this catalogue the figurities have been classified as distinct from the dolls and toys as they are symbolic and became religious objects when they are consecrated. Now a days these figurities may be used as phythings by the children, but actually they belong to the 'ageless type', either revealing some sacred tignificance or tome ritualistic association. Prof. Stella Kranfirisch rightly observes, "The chronology of Indon terracottas has given rise to much speculation and several conclusions have been drawn from the existence of the various types. 'Primitive types' have been assigned an early and sometimes a prehistoric date. The 'primitive types', boxever, are as



A general study of the 'ageless types' of the clay or terracotta figurines found at different proto-historic or historical sites of India and made by the village potters even to-day, clearly shows that such timeless types with their periodic variations have retained some notable characteristics of traditional art, and on careful examination may throw considerable light on the socio-religious background of Indian Culture from very early age down to the present day. Special mention may here be mad! of a good number of 'agricus types' of clay or terracotta figurires, dolls and toys of the Manryya, Sunga, Kuthana, Gupta and mediaeval periods which, being recovered through recent explorations and excurations carried out under the auspices of the Astrioth Museum at different-archaeological sites of West Bengal such as Chandraketagarh, Harinäräyanpur and Atghara in 24-Parganda district and Tambuk, Tildi, Plinni, Raghunlithbiri and Bihiri in Matnapore district may prove. that the Folk-Art of Bengal probably wars its origin to the age-old artistic traditions followed by the clay-modellers of the ancient community. The mother and child figurises and the toys representing animals like dog, bull, home, elephant, bird, etc., bear the same characteristics in their style and execution, which are still noticeable in the treatment of the similar type of folk-art examples produced by the claymodellers of Bengal even today. It should be noted in this connection that a multilated terracotta toy-cart from Chandraketogarh, which stylistically belonging to the

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[PL II, Fig. 7]

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[Pt. X, Fig. 19]

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Charac ing East Bengal



48. Male doll

Wherein makes the painted with blue test black and sellow in a witter provided a shown weating testimating garments on his body. The manual testeatures as expressed in the facial treatment and other parts of he body evident represent the dolate be a typical rural man of Bengal.

He 11.1

Brithary Dt Min'apire West Bengal

49. In Worster mak as I parted with red a line supergreen his and white and representing a king a alway weappy a problem of red rough robe a common traken and much result in the robe of the that the hair is happy down the analysis.

Htt. 9".

[Pt. X11, Fig. 25.1

Nabadwip, Dt. Nadid, West Bengal.

When an man be printed will get a fine blue by and white probably represent Roma the point Epiteric II a shown here dressed with royal contained with an example contained with an example of containing to be also able to be feet as allowed by a less of colour.

FIG. 8 V.

Ps. XII Fig. 2/1

Dacca Last Bengal

St. 10 We when make of the parabod with wellow of the hand white probably represents I thehmana the brother it Rama. Here I inchrease to shake a wearing a value science at that it Rama uses. An felt excepting the rise I rabe. His left have in second to be rested on the wars, white the parameter are pagited with second and hard ontil it less if they are the went has been eather order a may that the extreme haver a thing of the figure appears to be a predestal.

Ht 87"

[Pt. XII Fig. 22]

David Fast Bengal

Same as No. 51 excepting that the right hand it slightly uplified
 on the waist

Ht 89"

Dacca East Bengal



53. Krieban

the flow a grown of the area. The did in the and and from a least of the area and from a least of the area of the area and action as an alternative.

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Ht. 3.9".

[PL XIII Fig. 28]

Javengar Maj Ipor Dt. 24 Patrania, West Bengal

58. Banabibl

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Ht 3.9"

[Pt. XIII, Fig. 29]

John gar Mail, or Dt. 24 Parparas. West Benga-

59. Portuguese Saheb Hen tende chas male do I is bare I with ellow red his kind great facepart in the probability represents a Portuguese Salach. The schame of the maissive his to soon to be expressed in the exotic treatment of the chest looking like a how. The full is also shown weating a blick tooking like a how. The full is also shown weating a blick tooking like a how. The full is also shown weating a blick took took court has led with a borde of eight of ry work. That he arrasans it has were begin if were otherweather took the Portuguese's little may be proved by he execution of such a doll from Fandput.

Ht. 6".

[Pt. XIII, Fig. 30]

Fundpur, East Bengal.

60. Portuguete Bibi Same as \$1.50 with the exception that it is a female fleare we store a chall type black blouse paint. I with jewellenes and earlier livy works undean elimented coffere ornamented with jewellenes. It should be noted that in spite of Porturuse in that he into this retained his own trul toward qualities in its

treatment and execution of the doll.

Ht. 6".

[PL XIII, Fig. 3] }

Fundpur, East Bengal.



6T BIN

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11 66 [Pt NIV Fit 25]

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16 '4 (Pt \15 in 32)

No ky Di Cara Beliar

61 Owl

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Ht. 79°, [PL. XIV, Fig. 34]

Nabadwip, Dt. Nadil, West Bengal.

TOYS

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Ht. 73"

[Pt. XV. Fig. 1]

Kandi Dt Murshidahau Wast Banal

2. Some as No. 1

Ht 4.8"

Kāndi, Dt. Murshidabād, West Bengal

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[Pr. AV. Fig. 21]

Charles Chhilie pur Bhat

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Pt XX Fig. 34

An fall Dt. Burdwan, West Bergal

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6. " * Sam as No 4

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Andal Di Burdwan West Beigid



7 Stuffed toy-borse 5 mic. is No. 4 34 - 83

V. E. Di Brown Wall Bernal

8. Tay-horse

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(Pt. AV. Fig. 41)

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Ht 3.7"

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10-10-4

[Pt XVI Fig. 5]

Monroup, b Ford Bergal

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Hr 56

Deschat Sorth , Pare nat

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Toy lorse

its style and execution reminds as of the same type of terral

Ht. 4.1".

[PL XVI, Fig. 6]

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Pc XVI Fig. 73

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Ht 64

(Pr. AVI. Do. 8)

Chittigong East Bergal

15.

Same as No. 14

Ht 64

Chitagopa Lost Bergal

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Rt 37

Chittagong, East Bengal

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[Pt XVII Fits 9]

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Ht 4.5 | Pr XVII Fig 10.1

Chitt i, ing Elist Bengul

23.

Name as No. 22.

Htt:541

the goog East Beneal

24. Plephant

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Ht 3.4"

Children East Bengal

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Ht 5 1 [Pt Well Eng 11]

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Hr 64

TPi XVII Fig. 12.1

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[Pt. XIX, Fig. 16.]

Chittagorg, East Bengal.

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[Pt. XIX. Pio. 17.]

Chittaging, East Bengal.

46 Peacock

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PLATE V





















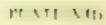
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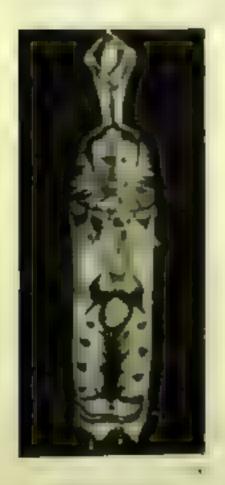
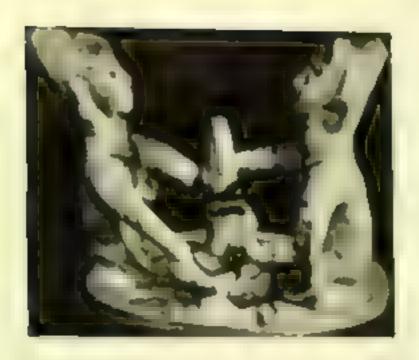






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PLATE XII

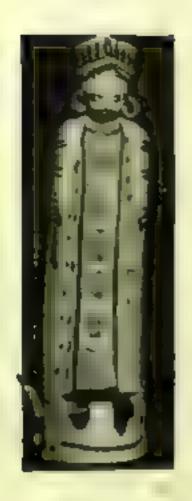








PLATE ARE











PLATE XIV









PLATE XV











PLATE XVII











PLATE XVIII



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PLATE XIX.





